

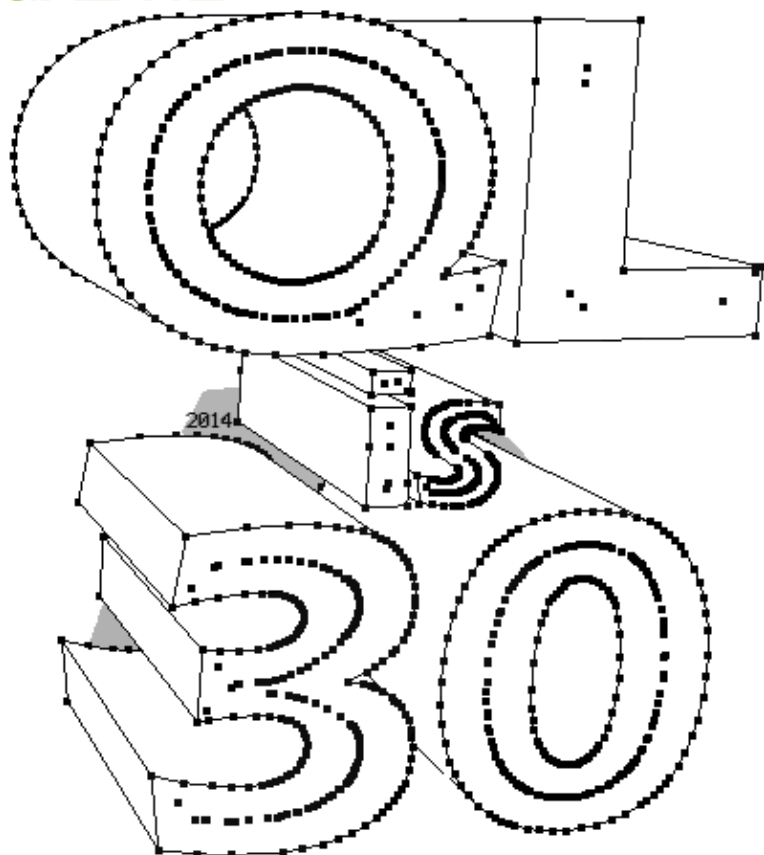
THE

Volume 31 Issue 5 OCT NOV



MAGAZINE

IS THE QL READY FOR A
NEW LEASE OF LIFE?



QUANTA

INFORMATION ON THE ASSOCIATION

Membership of QUANTA, the independent QL user group, is by annual subscription. The Membership Secretary can supply full details. Copies of the association's constitution & annual accounts are available from the Secretary.

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QUANTA.org

Currently watching this video? <https://>

www.youtube.com/watch?v=WF7ahxJ3f-k

Welcome to this issue which includes many features around the 'QL is 30' meeting at Edinburgh. For those of you who only ever read this magazine in paper form and not much else can I urge you to watch the video on Youtube as detailed at the bottom of page 3 and repeated in Dilwyn's QUANTA News.

It will give you a flavour of the goings on at that meeting and you will get to see some familiar and not so familiar faces. This is especially if you were not able to attend, myself included (sad face or as in emoticon language :- (). What is particularly interesting is the shots at 3:39 and 3:49, so please if you have access to the web or know someone who does, take a look.

The other exciting thing to come out of the QL is 30 Meeting will be found by looking at the images in this issue on page 24. Drooling is allowed, however if you are reading this in paper form, do try and avoid drooling over the magazine and making it soggy. All will become clear if you read all the articles in the magazine. My personal thanks goes to all those involved in getting the event to happen, and especially our own Dave for a trigger part way through the year and for Geoff Wicks for pushing it forward.

A reminder please:

We are seeking a volunteer for the role of Treasurer

We are seeking a volunteer for the role of Membership Secretary

Or we are seeking a volunteer for the role of both (above)

The Editor

If you have QL-related news items that you'd like us to include on this page, please get in touch with News Editor - Dilwyn Jones at news@quanta.org.uk

QL Is 30

I had hoped to listen in to the talks given at the QL Is 30 meeting by Skype, but sadly a combination of wifi not working at the venue plus enthusiastic group discussions and hardware work at the tables meant some of the planned program was abandoned to allow the enthusiastic meeting to continue in the main hall, so I didn't manage to get a handle on all that went on there, so I hope others will report on the event, news and photographs from the meeting elsewhere in this issue. I was particularly disappointed I didn't get to hear Peter Graf's talk on his Q68, QL PUI (graphical user interface for QL) and QLwIP communications system – I hope others will be able to report on this.

Videos

In the meantime, Urs König has put together a couple of brief videos from the dinner and meeting. Have a look at these:

<http://youtu.be/fcaV1UkKUPM>

<http://youtu.be/WF7ahxJ3f-k>

Sinclair QL Box-Sets

RWAP Software have released further box-sets of games in this 30th year of the QL, having spent time tracking down and reaching agreements with the various copyright holders. All of the box-sets are supplied on 3.5" disk, complete with printed manuals and

specially designed boxes and feature some games which have not been generally available since the 1980s. RWAP have plans for 2 more for Christmas. Games box-sets 3 to 5 were launched at the QL Is 30 meeting in Edinburgh.

The RWAP Software 30th Anniversary box sets are all priced at £20 each (QL Adventures is £15 for 5):

QL Adventures 1:

- Return to Eden by RWAP Software
- Nemesis MKII by Talent+
- The Darkside of the Moon by Javid Systems
- The Lost Kingdom of Zkul by Talent+
- Horrorday by Talent+

QL Adventures 2:

- The Prawn by Talent+
- West by Talent+
- Mortville Manor by Pyramide
- Aquanaut 471 by Microdeal

QL Games 1:

- Nebula II (both French and English versions) by Pyramide
- Hoverzone by Talent+
- Alien Hijack by Chisoft
- FlightDeck by RWAP Software & Brian Henderson
- Black Knight by Francois Lanciault
- Puzzle Mania by Chisoft

QL Games 2:

- QL Flight Simulator by Microdeal
- Blast Buggy by Shadow Games

- Night Nurse by Shadow Games
- The Lonely Joker by Jochen Merz Software
- Hopper by Microdeal
- Gwendoline by Labochrome

QL Games 3:

- Double Block by Francois Lanciault
- E.V.A. by Westway Limited
- Jungle Eddi by Talent+
- Arcanoid by Jochen Merz Software
- The Open Golf by RWAP Software
- Baron Rouge by Labochrome

QL Games 4:

- Cuthbert in Space by Talent+
- Deathstrike by Talent+
- Lands of Havoc by Microdeal
- Farmer by Talent+
- QL Vroom by Pyramide
- The King by Microdeal

QL Games 5:

- QL Wanderer by Pyramide
- The Lost Pharoah by Talent+
- Firebirds by Jochen Merz Software
- Stone Raider II by Talent+
- Crazy Painter by Shadow Games
- QL Pengi by Jochen Merz Software

More details and ordering appear on SellMyRetro:

<http://www.sellmyretro.com/search/naturalSearch?keyword=ql+box-set>

QUO VADIS
DESIGN

Independent Information
Technology Services

www.ql-qvd.com

QL/QDOS/SMSQ/E Software

QUO VADIS DESIGN Independent Information Technology Services

QL/QDOS/SMSQ/E Software

Home Products Support Company Contact

Welcome

Quo Vadis Design sells software for the Socratic Quantum Leap computer (QL) and variants including a new OS called SMSQ/E.

The QL is a computer in its 25th year Anniversary.

News

- QVD QL News Blog - keep up to date
[News Blog](#)
04/04/2009
- Quo Vadis Design Website Launched
01/02/2009

FEATURED PRODUCT



BUY NOW!

Software emulations of the QL now exist which can run on a PC/Mac with Windows/E Mac Operating systems.

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UK

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Fax: +44 (0)870 0568755

**QPC2 IS NOW FREE AND
AVAILABLE FROM MARCEL
KILGUS WEBSITE**

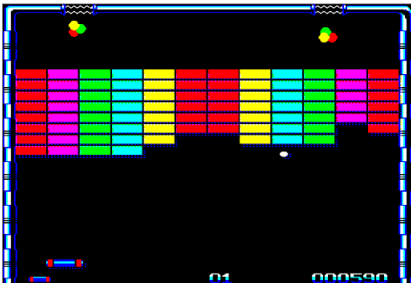
<http://www.kilgus.net/qpc/index.html>

**Congratulations to Marcel
on becoming a Father**

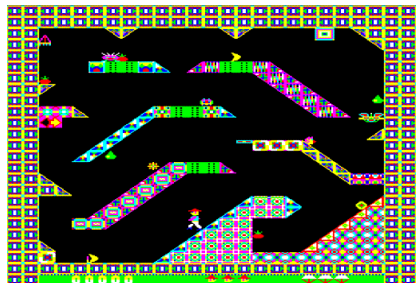
**Check the QL News Blog on
our website for updates.
www.ql-qvd.com/blog**



Covers from games box-sets 3-5



Screen shots from Arcanoid (left) and Baron Rouge



Screen shots from EVA (left) and Farmer



Screen shot from Firebirds

Some of the boxed-sets available via SellMyRetro.com

Rich Mellor at RWAP Software is still looking for volunteers to help him with both tracking down authors of copyrighted older software and maintaining that invaluable source of information, the QL Wiki.

If you have never had a look at the QL Wiki, go online to :

http://www.rwapadventures.com/ql_wiki

and see just how much has already gone into setting up and maintaining this resource. Rich reckons there are still hundreds of titles to be added to the Wiki, maybe even more, if people search through the early QL World magazines.

Rich wants to try to contact the following people and companies regarding some older QL software. Can anyone help him?

Alex Waye (wrote QL Ambition)

Ron Massey (who wrote a lot of reviews for QL World)

Steve Sutton - APT / ACT, Lightning, Perfection

Jurgen Falkenberg

Aholasoft (**Jussi Koskinen**) - Sam the Little Spaceman

PCBS - Heart of Gern / The Talisman

Okoloko Engineering Software (Rich has written to the person behind this, but he did not reply – does anyone have an up to date contact address?)

Also, would anyone be able to assist Rich with Super Sprite Generator as per the forum entry:

<http://qlforum.co.uk/viewtopic.php?f=3&t=1083>

“Does anyone have a tool to convert sprites designed by an earlier version of Super Sprite Generator to the v4 program?”

Night Nurse was created using the early version of Super Sprite Generator, so I have changed the source code to use the latest v4 code - unfortunately, the Sprites do not show on screen - alas I do not have the frames for the individual sprites which is presumably what is required....”

QL Software Preservation

One of the spin-off benefits of work Rich has done to preserve commercial QL software is that many authors have given permission for their older QL software to be released as freeware. The term ‘freeware’ is used to describe software which can be freely copied on a non-profit basis, but the author retains copyright to the software (as distinct from public domain software, where the author may have relinquished rights to the software).

Much of this software has been made available through my own

website over the last year or two – you can generally find recently added items by going through the list of site updates document on my website at www.dilwyn.me.uk .

I am very grateful to Rich for steering some of these programs in my direction, often when he has spent some considerable time contacting authors and verifying that the program can genuinely be freely released. I have had to reject one or two packages which a few people have sent me in good faith, unaware that the program may actually have been sold several years ago with no documentation to explain its copyright status, for example. It's surprising how much time it takes to check and go through all this.

Examples of some of the older programs I have been able to add to my website include the XTC68 compiler and libraries, which lets you use the C68 compiler on DOS and Linux systems, plus the QDOS GCC cross-compiler for Linux. Both are available to download from the C page on my website at :

<http://www.dilwyn.me.uk/c/index.html>

Tomas Kral in the Czech Republic has written a program to help with downloading The Painter. The issue here was that The Painter uses some non-standard QDOS file types which the QDOS Zip program was not able to process fully, Painter fonts lost their file type 4 header and it could be fiddly correcting these after download.

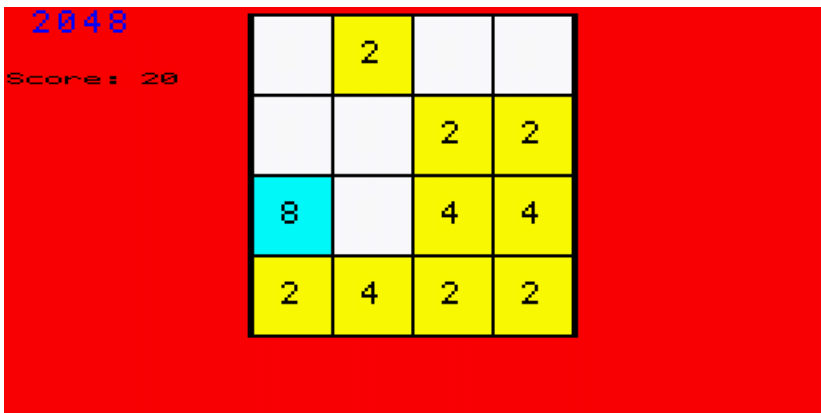
Tomas supplied a small SuperBASIC program which will take care of restoring the fonts for Painter v4.04 to the required file type 4. It doesn't need any specific extensions and has been tested to work

on JS ROM. Brief instructions are on the page with the download on my website at :

<http://www.dilwyn.me.uk/graphics/index.html>

Tomas has also provided an updated version of a graphics program called Leonardo, written by Rolf Bühler, which is available from the same page. This is well worth a look as Tomas has done some good work updating this program. He has also added in a mouse driver: Leonardo can now support a serial mouse in SER1.

Leonardo is written entirely in SBASIC using just QL ROM functions, does not rely on any specific extensions or machine code and will run on plain unexpanded QLs with 128K. It can demonstrate fully SBASIC drawing capabilities, while it can produce useful simple screen graphics, and can also be used to edit screen captures made by other programs.



Screen dump from 2048

François Lanciault has given me permission to include his 2048 puzzle game (which you see on some mobile phone systems). This

is written entirely as a fairly short (130 lines or so) BASIC program, where you push numbers around a small board trying to get the numbers to add up to a given value. Being written in BASIC means you can have a look at how it works and ‘tinker’ with it to enhance it if you wish.

Thanks once again to Martin Head’s work on going through old PD software libraries, I have been able to add programs as diverse as an old C68 bug fix pack and an utility to edit the country specific keyboard layouts on an Atari ST fitted with a QL emulator card.

He also found a more recent version of a program called JPEG2GIF by Emiliano Barbaini, for converting JPEG files, and this version also handles other graphics file types such as BMP, GIF, OS2, PPM, PGM, RLE and TARGA. This version is an 89K download from :

<http://www.dilwyn.me.uk/graphics/index.html>

MSPRV Updated

MSPRV is a program written by Per Witte originally to view QL sprite graphics, and now Bob Spelten jr has updated the program to improve areas such as the handling of very large QL sprites, using experience gained from working on his SQRview program.

Bob has added a level 2 config system, and Msprv now checks for and if present uses the Home Directory function to locate its files. This is just a sample of the many changes made. Download the Msprv sprite viewer from:

<http://www.dilwyn.me.uk/sprites/index.html>

QLUB Newsletters

Following on from the news in the last issue that we had been able to make the QL Adventurers Forum and QL Leisure Review magazines available as PDF files, I can now announce that the old QLUB Newsletters are also online, as PDF files and also as individually scanned PNG pages. Making them available as zipped up graphical scans means the ".zip" filename extension can be changed to ".cbz", then a comic viewer will open the file, and you can read it as comfortably as with a PDF viewer (thanks to Marcos Cruz for that little tip – I'd never heard of that before!). All 9 issues of QLUB that I am aware of are available to view on the site – if anyone knows of any further issues of QLUB magazine from that period, I would be very grateful to hear from you. View the scanned magazines at :

<http://www.dilwyn.me.uk/mags/index.html>

QLUB

News for the QL user

New-price QL sells in big numbers

The new \$199.95 price for the QL is proving immensely popular with the buying public as thousands of the machines moved off the shelves in the wake of the recent change.

The increase in the QL-using fraternity means a lot of time when software is flooding on to the market and further upgrades of existing machines are not only on being made available to the public but are also on hand in the home of new software-makers. It is a great time to be a software developer and an excellent time to be a user. The QL is a machine that is easy to use and easy to learn. It is a machine that is easy to use and easy to learn. It is a machine that is easy to use and easy to learn.

The new version of the QL software also offers a more robust back-up system for the QL. It is a machine that is easy to use and easy to learn. It is a machine that is easy to use and easy to learn. It is a machine that is easy to use and easy to learn.

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QL Quizzes	7
Special Offer Office	8

New QL printer shipped

Shipments of Sinclair's new, specially designed serial dot-matrix printer proceed rapidly with the QL. It begins the last year - much in the spirit of many QL users, who will find that the machine is ready to plug-and-go with their own.

The high-quality printer offers several modes, including over letter quality (NLQ) as well as a graphics mode which allows 64 graphics before changing from 64. It is a machine that is easy to use and easy to learn. It is a machine that is easy to use and easy to learn. It is a machine that is easy to use and easy to learn.

If you have difficulties obtaining the printer, please contact Sinclair, 2, Kings Hill Park, Iwerke, Berkshire, SL5 8BP or by telephone on 0990 28612.

It is only 100 mm wide, 110 mm high and 210 mm across and weighs less than the kilograms. A wide variety of paper sizes can be used, as paper is accepted either by friction or the roller. You can also use carbon paper with the printer - allowing you to make up to five additional copies of documents while printing using as the total thickness of the paper and carbon does not exceed 0.2 mm.

sinclair

QLUB newsletter, issue 9

RWAP Software

We have been working hard to safeguard the future of the Sinclair QL through creating an online QL Wiki backed by a repository of QL titles.

The QL Wiki enables people to see what software and hardware was produced for the Sinclair QL. The repository enables people to purchase working copies when their microdrive cartridges fail, or they move onto disks or emulators. Where we can, we obtain permission from the copyright holders to re-release items on the market.

This has enabled us to bring some of the titles back to the market as well as re-ignite interest in the Sinclair QL and its emulators.

Old favourites brought back to life include:

E.V.A., Vroom
Black Knight, Double Block
Jungle Eddi, The Lost Pharaoh
Pangi, the Lonely Joker
Microdeal's Flight Simulator, QL Hopper, The King,
Night Nurse and Cuthbert in Space
Mortville Manor, Darkside of the Moon (£10)

We still retain our existing catalogue, including:

Open Golf, Return to Eden,
Stone Raider II, The Prawn,
Hoverzone, Lost Kingdom of Zkul,
Deathstrike, Horrorday,
Flightdeck and QWord

All games are available on disk or for use with Q-emuLator on the PC **from ONLY £5 each**

Microdrive versions also available - from £10 each.
Memory / system limits may apply - please check before ordering.

Visit the QL Wiki for more details on software, books and hardware for the Sinclair QL:

www.rwapadventures.com/ql_wiki

RWAP Software
3 Dale View Court, Fulford, Stoke-on-Trent
Staffordshire ST11 9BA
Tel: 01782 398143
Email: rich@rwapservices.co.uk

Website:
www.rwapsoftware.co.uk or www.sellmyretro.com



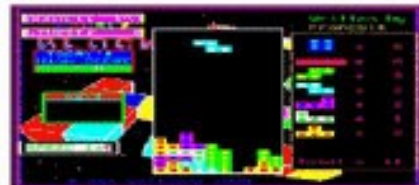
Vroom by Pyramide



E.V.A by Westwey



Mortville Manor by Pyramide



Double Block by Francois Lancaut



Night Nurse by Microdeal

SPRV

This is a program I wrote to help me with Q-Dock development. It is a sprite viewing program which is able to view large sprites, and as its main feature it has a ‘tiled’ mode which allows you to view all of both bitmap mask and alpha mask sprites in a directory. Since I have made and converted so many sprites for icons and docks for Q-Dock, it was becoming hard to keep track of them, hence why I wrote this program.

It is able to display sprites from all of the modes I have been able to test it with. It is just a viewer program – it doesn’t let you edit or design sprites – and it has two modes of operation. You can use it as a sprite browser by navigating to a folder and clicking on a sprite filename to view it in a window on the right of the browser window together with a basic display of statistics such as size and mode.

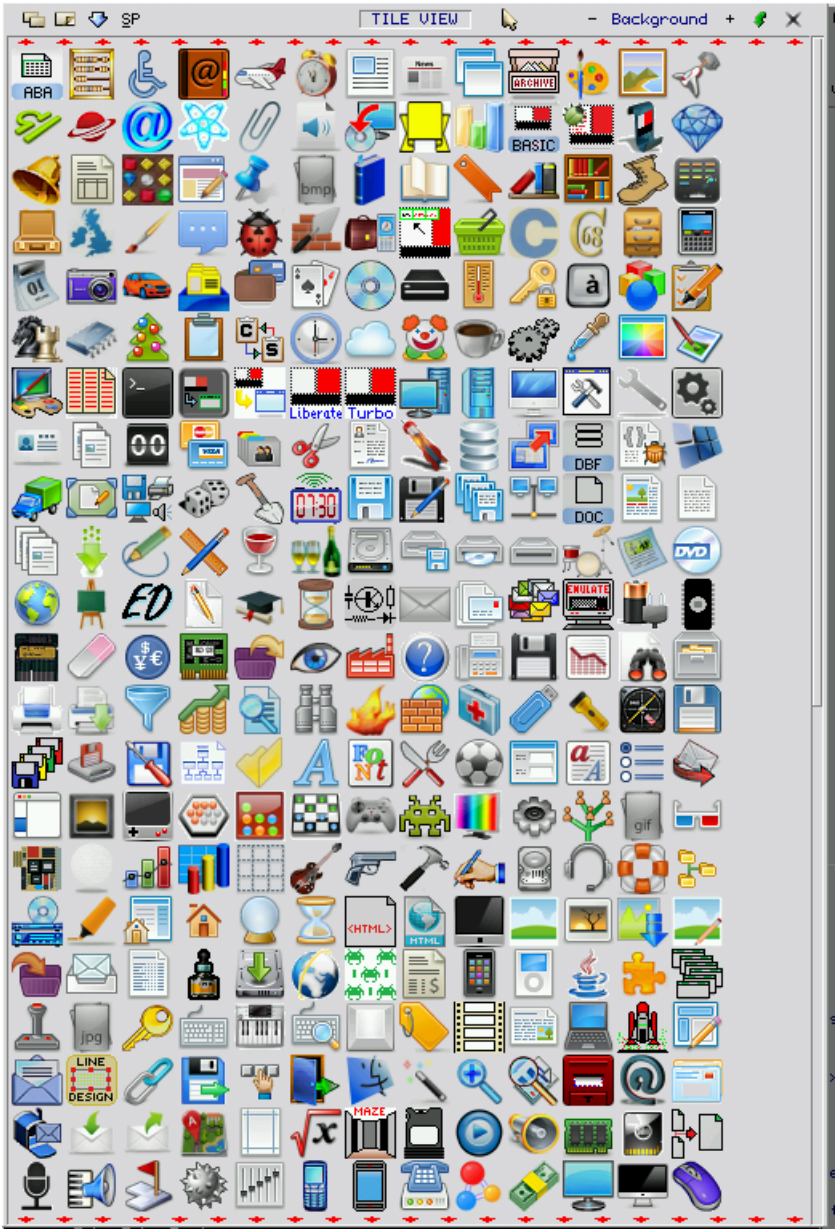
You can click on a tile icon and the display changes to show a grid of sprites and can resize its display if viewing larger sprites such as the ones used as docks in the main Q-Dock program.

SPRV is available to download free of charge from the Q-Dock page on my website, address below.



Sprv used in sprite browser mode (above) and tiled sprite viewing mode (below)

As you may have guessed from the picture below, a large number of sprites have been designed and converted for Q-Dock.



Right from the beginning, I took the view that people like Tony Tebby and Marcel Kilgus had laboured long and hard to bring us “colour drivers” and the like, so I should put a lot of effort into making Q-Dock visually attractive yet immensely practical and easy to use.

So I rounded up a lot of public domain sprites from the PC world out there and converted them to 32x32 pixel QL sprites so as to give as much choice as possible since Q-Dock revolves around icons and graphics.

A few hundred icons are supplied with Q-Dock, the remainder (about three thousand of them in all!) will be made available to download as free packages from the Q-Dock and Sprites pages on my website:

www.dilwyn.me.uk/qdock/index.html and
www.dilwyn.me.uk/sprites/index.html

Q-Dock

After what will probably be remembered as the longest delay ever in QL software production, Q-Dock will finally be out when you read this! The original intention was to formally launch it in a presentation by Skype at QL Is 30 but circumstances at the event (see above) meant this could not be done.

I took advantage of the time to add more and more features to the program while simultaneously making the program easier to use and visually more attractive by adding features such as icon shadows and reflections.

The program will be available from Quo Vadis Design along with my other QL software and CDs. Further information from the Q-Dock page on my website at :

www.dilwyn.me.uk/qdock/index.html

Q-Bar

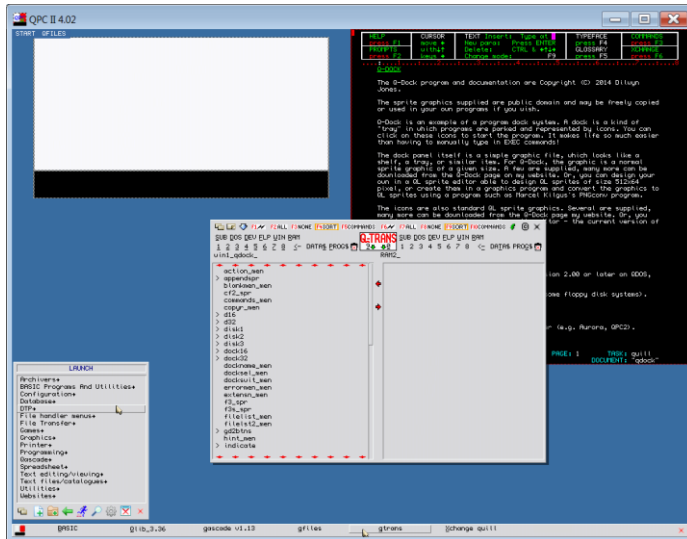
Produced in parallel with Q-Dock, this is a start menu and taskbar system for QL and compatible systems running Window Manager 2. The two main elements are shown the bottom of the screen in the picture below – the taskbar which runs along the bottom (it can be moved to any of the four sides of the screen) shows a list of programs currently running. You can pick that program just by clicking on the name, or by right clicking you can choose actions such as removing the job or putting it to sleep in the button frame.

There is a small QL-style red white and black button in the corner, this activates the Start menu which is shown just above that icon in the picture. The ‘Launch’ menu, as it’s properly called, is based on the Quicklaunch menu system from Launchpad and lets you set up lists of your programs, which can be grouped into folders of related programs if you wish.

Like Launchpad and Q-Dock, it’s all designed to put front end GUIs onto your QL-compatible system to make it easier to use and of course cut down on repetitive typing of EXEC and similar commands to start QL programs.

Q-Bar will be available from the same sources as Q-Dock and information about Q-Bar is also available from :

www.dilwyn.me.uk/qdock/index.html



Screen shot of Q-Bar in use

Urs König Meets Rick Dickinson

During September, Urs had the opportunity to meet former Sinclair Industrial Designer, Rick Dickinson while he was on holiday in Switzerland.



Urs König and Rick Dickinson

JOCHEN MERZ SOFTWARE

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47169 Duisburg, Germany**

**Fax +49 203 502012
EMail: SMSQ@J-M-S.com**

SMSQ.J-M-S.COM

**Thanks to Marcel, QPC2 is now freely available.
You can download it from Marcells homepage**

www.Kilgus.net

If you wish to print from QPC2, then you need

QPCPrint

... which is available from J-M-S.

Only 39.90 if you choose EMail delivery.

For additional 4 EUR, delivery will be on CD.

QPCPrint will allow you to print to (more or less) every printer which is installed under Windows (dot matrix, ink, laser, PDF "printer", FAX "printer" etc.)

You can place your order via letter or use the SSL order form on SMSQ.J-M-S.COM - click on "Online orders".

If you order by Mail or through the SSL contact form: We now accept VISA, MasterCard, Diners Club, JCB, Discover, UnionPay, BCard, DinaCard and American Express!

The order form has not been updated for the new card types at the time I write this ad, but it will be updated soon.

I am still working on changing the forms and implementing SEPA on all the order forms.

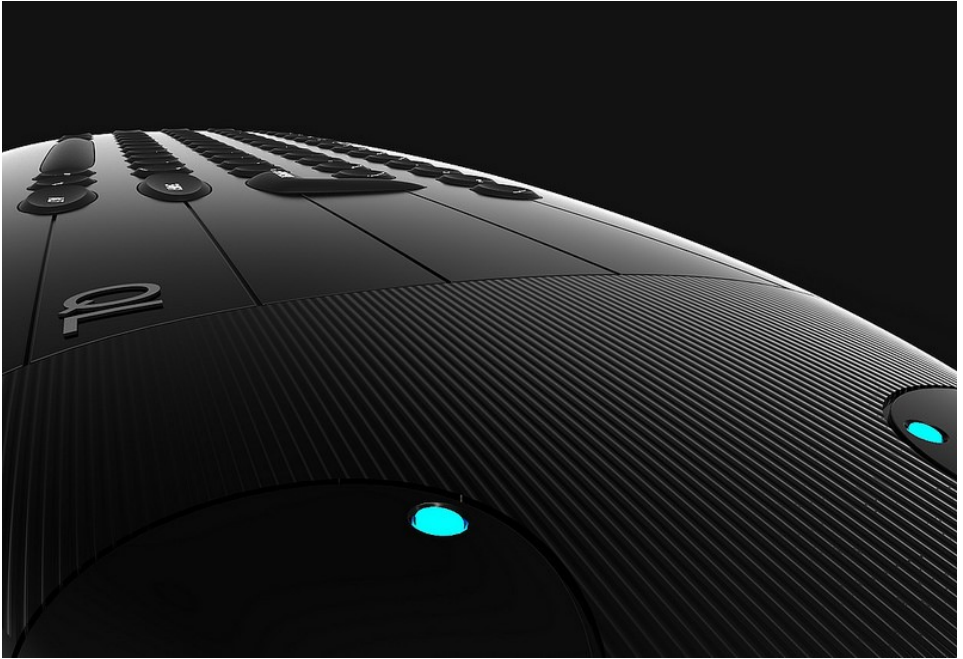
They met in Weggis, on the shores of Lake Lucerne, near where the 25th anniversary meeting was held a few years back.

Urs is now the proud owner of a QL internally signed by the man who designed the QL case.



To celebrate the 30th anniversary of the QL, Rick has designed a few images of how the QL might look if the case was designed today – you can see the original pictures on Flickr at :

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/9574086@N02/15312402247/in/photostream/>



(Cool, Ed.)



(Super Cool, Ed.)

Also in September, the Musée Bolo at the EPFL campus in Lausanne, Switzerland - which took part in La Nuit des Musées 2014 on Saturday, September 27th, 2014, exhibited several machines celebrating their anniversary this year, including the Sinclair QL and the Apple Macintosh. Didier Luthi gave a talk.



Urs was also hoping to complete and talk about his update of the final QL Today DVD, now called QL Is 30-The Distribution. Further details at : <http://www.qlis30.org.uk/#TheDistribution>

COMMENT

STEVE WHITEHOUSE

I saw a question in the last QUANTA mag discussing moving to electronic editions only so I thought I'd drop in my opinion for what it's worth.

The matter of whether it was appropriate to go electronic only seemed to be concentrated on people's access to e-readers (Kindles, tablets etc.) Whilst this is of course relevant, to me it is not the biggest thing.

Paper is nice, when I kick back to read my favourite mag I want it to be paper. I started coding at age 13 (on the newly released QL!) and after twenty years as a developer and now ten years in IT management I've spent most of my life staring at screens. I have tablets, a Kindle, smart phones, laptops, games consoles and media players, so do I have the facilities to read an electronic version of the QUANTA mag? Yes of course. Would I? Well, no.

Just like I don't read the electronic versions of my gaming mags, music mags, bike mags, production mags or IT mags. Whenever any of these has gone electronic only (which has happened a few times), I just stop reading them, not through any righteous indignation but just because the format doesn't work for me. Paper is nice, it just is. And you can read it in the bath without fear of 500 quid going up in smoke if you accidentally drop it.

So for what it's worth, I just wanted to weigh in with the viewpoint that whether an electronic mag only route is workable does not rely just on people being able to read the electronic version, but also on whether they want to.

It would be a great shame if we lose the paper edition of the magazine.

(If you would like to comment on this or any other aspect of the QUANTA magazine, then please contact editor@quanta.org.uk)

The show weekend had finally arrived! The car was loaded up with a large box of goodies from RWAP plus an old laptop with q-emulator installed and we set off on the Friday evening for the three hour drive north to Edinburgh, with a sense of excitement having not attended a QL show before.

The next day we had a short five minute trip from the hotel to the show venue, Gyle Hall at St. Thomas's Episcopal Church. The hall was easy to find and we arrived around 9.40, to find the hall slowly filling up and everyone setting up various laptops, computers and QL equipment.



The RWAP Stall

After a welcoming from Geoff Wicks, we picked out a table and set up our stall next to Tobias Fröschle. On the stall we had the debut of three new Game Box Sets, Volumes 3, 4 and 5 which included new re-releases of:

Nebula II (both French and English versions) by Pyramide
Puzzle Mania by Chisoft
Gwendoline by Labochrome
E.V.A. by Westway Limited
Arcanoid by Jochen Merz
Baron Rouge by Labochrome
Farmer by Talent+
Firebirds by Jochen Merz Software

The stall also had various Sinclair keyboard membranes, miscellaneous QL items and a Microdrive cartridge lucky dip. I had an old laptop on display to demo my work in progress ACT adventure game. Kendra manned the stall throughout the day and was also to thank for driving me to the show.

Once setup everyone started to mingle to see who had turned up and what was on display. Having nametags with both real names plus forum names helped hugely to put names to faces and break the ice. The show was quickly under full flow. It took some shrill peeps from a whistle to quieten the hall to announce that Peter Graf was ready to start his morning talk.

Peter presented an excellent talk covering three main items:

- ◆ **QLwIP** - native ethernet and TCP/IP connectivity, with a text based web browser, webserver and email client.

- ◆ **QLPUI** - a modern style graphical user interface, which ran without the need for the pointer environment.
- ◆ **Q68** - a compact QL compatible mainboard using programmable logic for the hardware.

I'll just cover these briefly as hopefully someone with a far better technical understanding can remember and report the finer details. I probably should have made notes but it was one of those times where you are just engrossed in the actual listening and watching.

QLwIP was very interesting. The lack of WIFI at the show due to issues meant that it could only be demonstrated internally.

Peter demonstrated the Q60 running a web server, which was streaming pages from a floppy disc to a web browser on a laptop. The floppy drive chugged into action once the address was entered into the laptop browser much to everyone's amusement.

The email client had various features including multiple accounts and attachments. Peter had tested it prior to the show by emailing the QL Mailing List with it.

The web browser was text based system based on an open source program (retawq?), but was not related to Lynx which was a common text based browser from some years ago.

QLPUI was a very crisp looking graphical user interface that ran without the need for the pointer environment. Features included proportional fonts, multiple themes with different styles, and different colour/screen modes amongst other things.

The **Q68** board is a QL compatible motherboard equipped with VGA, two SD card slots, USB and a ps/2 keyboard port. Peter demonstrated the board running some old favourites such as Psion Chess and also detailed the hardware design.

After the talk there was a quick question and answer session, then it was lunchtime with a break for food, refreshments and more QL chat. There was a full range of food and drink provided in the hall. With the Wi-Fi still being out of action, the afternoon programme changed slightly, after lunch everyone carried on exploring the various tables, working on projects and just talking QLs in general.

During the day I caught up with Detlef, who talked me through his excellent multipurpose, multitask QL setup. The QL was fitted with a QL-SD drive alongside the standard Microdrive, plus a floppy drive emulator box also equipped with a standard floppy drive and a VGA output box. Phew!



Detlef's setup

Detlef also showed me some upgraded and rather neat improved M(ice) ROMS, with a new board inside that had small piggyback board to convert a USB mouse signal to the standard required by M(ice).

Graeme Gregory, the moderator XorA on the QL Forum, was also attending his first QL show. I demonstrated my ACT based adventure game to Graeme and also Petri Pellinen, who had travelled to the show from Finland. Petri was in awe of ACT's confusing system language which names all variables as numbers.

Edinburgh based retro collector George Tingle, brought along a classic Apple Mac and an Acorn Risc PC to display something different at the show.

The NEMQLUG table (Representing QUANTA at this event) and celebrating their Sub Group's 21st Birthday in August, ran a competition for the best high score on the maths puzzle game 2048.

I had never played the game before I'm still slightly confused about what was going on. Pairs of numbers had to be matched on a grid which could be scrolled up, down, left and right. Petri won a bottle of wine for the highest score on the day.

I met John Southern from the NEMQLUG, who kindly attempted to fill in the many blanks in my QL knowledge. Amongst other things John explained to me the differences, advantages and disadvantages between the various emulators and systems used by everyone. We also discussed the QL forum and the forum IRC chat channel.

The second and final presentation was presented by Urs König in a side room with a projector connected to a laptop. Urs talked in detail about the latest update to the QL Today Final DVD which was originally released with the final issue of QL Today.

The latest collection is being updated for release time allowing in the winter and will be available by download only. The collection has been updated with some excellent new material and runs to size of nearly 4.5GB. Features include all kinds of software, emulators, magazines, photos, manuals and much more.

Urs also presented some new designs of a 30th anniversary redesign of the QL by the original designer Rick Dickinson. The new design was well received in the room with Paul Veltjens immediately asking for the 3D printer files! The latest update looks to be a real treasure trove and it's fair to say that everyone is eagerly awaiting it.

The end of the show was now sadly, fast approaching, with just enough time for some final general discussion, goodbyes and thanks. I had a chat with Peter Graf who was keen to know how I felt about the Q68 having only used black box QLs.

I finally caught up with Urs for a quick chat. Urs had a busy day taking lots of photos and videos, which will hopefully make their way online soon. And lastly I said a quick hello to some of the German QL users including Tobias and Schombi.

We thoroughly enjoyed our first QL show; the atmosphere was great and very friendly. The only negative was that the hours seemed to whizz past and it was over all too soon, but time does fly when you are having fun.

Back in 1992 I wrote an 'epicycles' program which QUANTA printed. Yesterday I spent a couple of hours modifying it to demonstrate how to construct orbits around numerous heavenly bodies...a routine which I did in '92 but which became inaccessible on a Microdrive tape.

So I am happy having 'resurrected' it and include it as an attachment. There are no bugs this time! The question of orbits was for a long time considered unsolvable. The ancients thought that planet's trajectories could be defined as epicycles until Newton declared they were ellipses. But ellipses are just one form of epicycle, as are cardioids, circles, etc.

The Orbits program shows trajectories possible for two to five bodies, and by defining fractional bodies, (such as 2.5), you get transfer orbits from a ,say, two-body to a three-body system.

Of course these epicycles are 2D. In space they are 3D. Modern trajectory theory has moved on, but epicycles are fixed, in, for example, church window rosacea.

Indeed, by messing around with the variables you can produce some crazy curves... Happy cycling!

```
110 REMark Orbit_bas by S.Poole. v24sep14
```

```
120 CLEAR: ps=3: dv=1: qt=1/dv: sx=5: p=2*PI
```

```
130 st=.5: h=30: r1=RAD(1): r3=RAD(3): r6=RAD(6)
```

```

140 OPEN#1,con_128: WINDOW 512,256,0,0: u=3
150 SCALE 180,-130,-90: PAPER 0: INK 2
160 WINDOW#2,320,206,0,0: CLS
180 REPEAT main
190 v=RND(0 TO u): w=RND(1 TO u)
205 FOR bd=qt TO sx STEP qt
210     i=r3: IF bd<4: i=r6: END IF : IF bd>6:
i=r1
220     FOR r=-h TO h STEP st
230         FOR j=-1,1
240             AT 1,1: PRINT bd!!v!w,: p1=p+i
250             FOR f=0 TO p1 STEP i
260                 d=f*j+w: g=f*bd+d*v
290                 x=h*COS(d)+r*COS(g)
295                 y=h*SIN(d)+r*SIN(g)
300                 IF f : LINE m,n TO x,y
310                 m=x: n=y
320             END FOR f
330         END FOR j: PAUSE ps: IF r<>h AND r<>-h:

```

CLS

350 END FOR r: q\$=INKEY\$(#1,ps)

360 IF q\$<>' ': NEXT main

370 END FOR bd

380 END REPEAT main

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

SARAH GILPIN

QL is 30 began with a dinner at the Holiday Inn in Edinburgh on Friday 10th October. It was the start of an interesting weekend, where we met many old and new friends, a total of twenty-two guests.

Our hosts, John Sadler and George Gwilt, welcomed everyone before we sat down for dinner, which had a set menu. It is fair to say that the conversation was more interesting than the dinner.

On Saturday, 11th April, we met at the Gyle Hall for the QL is 30 event. It is not a large hall, so Geoff Wicks had arranged for a separate room for the talks. QL representatives were there from England, Scotland, Germany, The Netherlands, Finland and Switzerland totalling 26 people.

Peter Graf was the first scheduled speaker and chose to talk at his table so that he could more easily demonstrate his hardware and software. There were three sections to his talk starting with the development of his new Q68 hardware. He continued with the updates on Q60 where he has a network interface card which has

a webserver, a web browser and an email client.



Wolfgang Neudert playing 2048 while Petri Pellinen listens to Peter Graf



Peter Graf speaking to interested QL'ers

His final talk was about the desktop environment he has developed where he demonstrated how he could change fonts among other things.

Peter has done a great deal of hard work but gave the impression that it is unlikely that there would be any further development unless there is real interest shown by QL'ers.

Urs Koenig gave an impressive talk after lunch in the second room. He discussed the new version of the DVD that was originally produced after the last QLToday was issued. He has now also included all the issues of QLToday, some issues of QUANTA magazine covering about six years, a snapshot of all the information on Dilwyn Jones' site and the latest copy of QPC2 and SMSQmulator.

Urs has already put in a phenomenal amount of work, but he feels there is another 20 or so hours before it is complete. He hopes to have it ready by Christmas.

NEMQLUG have been developing some games for the QL. They had 2048, the number's addition game, converted from the PC version and Teaser, a game originally developed by John Gilpin in the Visual Basic part of Microsoft's Visual Studio 6.0, for the PC. Still in preparation for the QL are Pegsolitaire and Shut the Box.

NEMQLUG had issued a challenge for the event with a bottle of wine to the highest scorer on 2048. There were a number of players, with Wolfgang Neudert becoming addicted and having a

number of goes. The winner of the challenge was Petri Pellinen from Finland with a score of 5632.

Pete Van Peebles and his partner, Kendra, from Durham ran a table for RWAP. Other tables were run by Bob Spelten and Leo Moll; Detlet Obermann and Tobias Froeschle; Peter Scott and Graham Gregory and Urs Keonig.

Val Taylor volunteered to make the lunches, which included a choice of soup in addition to the usual sandwiches. Everyone enjoyed them and our thanks must be given for her hard work. We also must thank SQLUG, especially John Sadler, for their hard work in organising this event and Geoff Wicks for his help and encouragement.

Interest was expressed for other events at this time of year, but not in April. The idea of attending the AGM by Skype was welcomed by a number of the European QL'ers. This will enable QUANTA to develop the electronic AGM which was first held in 2014 and to possibly host another QL event later in the year.

Geoff Wicks has already stated on the QL Users list a couple of days after the event "that the cost of QL is 30 was around £300". This was paid for by SQLUG funds.

A big thank you goes to the six pledgee's generosity which has resulted in an surplus slightly in excess of £400 which QUANTA have been asked to hold in a separate account for use in organising further similar QL related events.



Colin McKay, Geoff Wicks, Urs Koenig, Bob Spelten, Leo Moll and Val Taylor

HELPLINE

DILWYN JONES

Members wishing to submit helpline requests via email can use the email address helpline@quanta.org.uk or if you prefer to use traditional post, please send the helpline request to me via the address printed inside the front cover of the magazine.

Obviously, we cannot guarantee to answer every query we receive, but we will do our best! Where we have been unable to answer the queries, we may print the help request as an open request in the magazine to ask if any of the readers can come up with a solution.

Of course, if readers feel that they have a better solution than we came up with, or would like to correct any errors we make, please write to us!

Remember that past Helpline columns are available to download and read from the QUANTA website – go to www.quanta.org.uk

and click on the LIBRARY & HELPLINE tab at the top, then click on HELPLINE from the menu which appears.

Q. Is it possible to make file handling programs open displaying a given drive or directory? Most of the time, these programs never open with the drives I want and it's a waste of time having to navigate to the same place every time!

A. It depends on the program you are using. Since you didn't specify, I'll use the QPAC2 files menu and my own Q-Trans dual window file manager as examples, plus a generalised answer which will work with some other programs.

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Visit the QL Wiki for more details on software, books and hardware for the Sinclair QL:
www.rwapadventures.com/ql_wiki

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1. Files menu:

Versions of QPAC2 later than 1.11 allow parameters to be passed to the various menu programs, such as the Files menu. The options are too extensive to go into in detail here – they are described in an Errata document supplied with the QPAC2 manual. Here's just one example:

```
EXEP files;'dwin2_'
```

The EXEP command from the hotkeys system is used, since the Files menu is a Thing made resident when QPAC2 is loaded. The part in quotes consists of a backslash, a letter d and the name of the drive/directory (in this case WIN2_).

2. Q-Trans:

Either or both drive/directory names used for either file windows can be passed in an EX command, separated by a space for left and right file list windows:

```
EX win1_qtrans_obj;'win1_ win3_docs_'
```

This makes Q-Trans start by displaying a list of files on WIN1_ in its left hand window, while showing files on WIN3_docs_ in the right hand window.

3. General

It is possible to call some programs with an extra parameter after the filename, called an 'Option Command Parameter'. To do this, just put the drive and/or directory name required after a semi colon after the filename:

```
EX win1_fileHandlerProgram;'devn_directory_'
```

Where devn_ is the device name and number, e.g. flp1_ or win1_ This option only works with programs which check for a command line parameter, and note that the standard EXEC and EXEC_W command are not suitable in most cases, you must use EX or EW commands.

Q. On other computer systems, I'm used to cut and paste in programs. The QL doesn't seem to offer this.

A. Some programs do offer a form of cut and paste using something called the Scrap system. This is included with the Menu Extension (Menu_Rext) from Jochen Merz and fully documented there. While it is quite easy to use via simple BASIC extensions, not that many programs know how to use it.

The command SCRAP_PUT places text or graphics onto the 'scrap' (the term used for the cut/paste system), while the command SCRAP_GET\$ fetches text from the scrap and SCRAP_GET fetches graphics. All the commands need differing parameters to specify exactly what you want to do, so you need to read the Scrap documentation first.

Even if your program is able to copy stuff to the scrap, relatively few older programs know how to paste stuff from the Scrap system.

One way around this with text is to use a HOT_STUFF command to put the text fetched from the Scrap with a SCRAP_GET\$

command:

```
HOT_STUFF SCRAP_GET$
```

So if your program puts some text on the Scrap using something like `SCRAP_PUT 0,"Hello world"` and you need to pass that to a program which doesn't normally allow Scrap content to be pasted in, go to BASIC and enter the command `HOT_STUFF SCRAP_GET$` which will copy the text into the hotkey stuffer buffer, from where an ALT-SPACE key press will put the stuffer buffer content into a program awaiting keyboard input.

To some extent you can automate this using a hotkey to save having to go to BASIC to enter the command – in this example, pressing ALT j copies the Scrap text to the Stuffer Buffer.

Note that the amount of text which can be copied into the stuffer buffer is probably quite short, some systems allow you to configure the size of the Stuffer Buffer itself. In any case, the Scrap system itself, like ordinary QL strings, will only handle up to 32K of text at the very most.

```
ERT HOT_CMD('j','HOT_STUFF SCRAP_GET$')
```

The only other way, when it comes to trying to copy text from a program which does not normally allow text to be copied to Scrap (or any kind of clipboard system), is to use one of a number of systems which software authors have written to examine and pick out text on the screen.

This is achieved by comparing the bitmap on the screen to the bit

patterns in QL fonts and decoding text out of the screen graphics. Authors such as Mark Knight, Simon Goodwin and Duncan Neithercut have written programs to do this, try

1. Mark Knight's Klipboard program, from :

<http://www.dilwyn.me.uk/utills/index.html>

2. Simon Goodwin's Qlipboard software, in volume S of his DIY Toolkit series for QL World. Download it from :

<http://www.dilwyn.me.uk/tk/index.html>

3. Duncan's ClipScrapBoard is also available from :

<http://www.dilwyn.me.uk/utills/index.html>

Q. I often need to pass short text back and forth between QPC and Windows programs. Is there a simple way of doing this?

A. If you use the Scrap system mentioned earlier in this article, you can use the command QPC_SYNCSCRAP to automatically synchronise the text on the Windows clipboard and the Scrap system (changes in either are copied to the other). The command only exists on QPC2, not other emulators.

If you use a QL editor such as QPC which understands the scrap system you can copy and paste within the program. Otherwise, use the indirect stuffer buffer method mentioned above.

For use with QL programs which don't understand the Scrap system, Marcel Kilgus wrote a short and simple SBASIC program which runs in the background to periodically copy the Scrap buffer text into the stuffer buffer so it can be recovered using ALT-Space for most programs.

Simply EX this BASIC program to run in the background on QPC2:

```
100 JOB_NAME 'SyncStuff'  
110 OPEN #3,con_0x0a0x0  
120 oldcnt% = SCRAP_CNT  
130 REPEAT  
140     IF SCRAP_CNT <> oldcnt% THEN  
150         REMark something has changed on the Scrap  
160         REMark so copy it into stuffer buffer  
170         HOT_STUFF SCRAP_GET$  
180         old_cnt% = SCRAP_CNT  
190     END IF  
200     PAUSE #3,50  
210 END REPEAT
```

Q. When my program starts it needs to know where to load some configuration information and font files. It doesn't look like it's possible for a QL program to know where it's been executed from to find these files.

A. I use two methods to achieve this. One is to use the Config system to include a small block of information telling the program where to look for its own files. Using the official Config system you can use the Config or Menuconfig programs to change the name of the drive and directory where your program looks for its files.

This presets the location of the file – if the user changes the directory where your program is stored, the user will need to change this preset value with either Config or MenuConfig program.

If your program is written in BASIC you can use software such as Oliver Fink's BasConfig software (updated several times by various people – get the latest copies from :

<http://www.dilwyn.me.uk/config/index.html>) or George Gwilt's U-Config program from the same page.

If you know that the program will be used on a system which includes something called the Home Directory thing, your program can use an extension called HOME_DIR\$ to check where it was executed from:

```
LET source$ = HOME_DIR$
```

and then load its files from source\$.

Q. How can my program check to see if an extension is already loaded?

A. The simplest way is to use an extension which looks in the name table for an extension with the same name as the one your program needs. Such an extension is 'EXISTS' by Phil Borman, available to download from <http://www.dilwyn.me.uk/tk/index.html>

To use it, just use a command like this to check for an extension called HOME_DIR\$, for example:

```
IF EXISTS('HOME_DIR$') = 1 THEN
    LET source$ = HOME_DIR$
ELSE
    REMark this system has no HOME_DIR$ command
    REMark so use a hard-wired default value or
    REMark config block value if you have provided
one
    LET source$ = 'win1_'
END IF
```

EXISTS can be included in a compiled BASIC program by linking it in the normal way for extension files, e.g. for Q-Liberator, place this directive near the start of the program to ensure it's linked in when you compile your program:

```
REMark $$asmb=win1_exists_cde,0,10
```

(obviously change the drive name to wherever you store the exists_cde file on your computer – the \$\$asmb directive is case sensitive).

Q. Is it possible to RESPR a BASIC extension only while a program is being run, then unload it later to release the memory it took?

A. Normally, no. Once an extension is installed using LRESPR or RESPR it is there until you reset or turn off the QL. There are extensions such as DESPR (from <http://www.dilwyn.me.uk/tk/index.html>) to release RESPR space, but these may not always unlink the extension from the name table so next time it's called it may crash the system.

However, SMSQ/E allows BASIC extensions to be 'local' to a daughter job (not in the main SBASIC, though). If you have started a second or subsequent SBASIC job, those can have extensions installed which are 'local' to them, so that when you close the SBASIC job the extension disappears with it.

SUBGROUP MEETINGS

Subgroup meetings are where QUANTA members and non-QUANTA members get together to discuss, tinker and explore all things QL related. As we are now approaching the end of summer (ha!) the October break may provide some more sunshine and much needed warmth. This might be a good opportunity to dust off those cobwebs and visit your local sub-group. There will always be plenty to talk about and a fresh face (new or old is always welcome). If there is not a sub-group near you why not hold one yourself? Contact the chairman on how to go about it, details on our contacts page.

QUANTA DORSET SUBGROUP – Dorset

Meetings are held, on the second Sunday of each month between 2.00pm and 5.00pm. For location please contact: John Mason - 01425 275894

LONDON QL AND QUANTA GROUP

Meetings are held in the School Room, which is the basement of the Borough Welsh Congregational Chapel, 90, Southwark Bridge Road, London SE1. This is almost opposite the junction with Marshalsea Road, at the other end of which, 5 minutes walk away, is the Borough Underground Station. Free parking is easily available in Southwark Bridge Road for road users, Cyclists are welcome. Members currently each pay a subscription of £40 per year towards the cost of the hire of the hall and a small additional charge is made for tea/coffee - biscuits are then provided free. Please bring your QL equipment if possible, all types welcome, e.g., PC portable running emulators. The Group has some systems stored at the venue for its use. In addition, there are lots of donated second user equipment, books, magazines, etc., available for purchase. Time: 2.00 pm. to 5.00 pm., on the second Sunday of the month. No meetings are held in December/January - winter break, or July/August –the summer break, giving 8 meetings a year. Malcolm Cadman 020 8691 5780 or email: QL@mcad.demon.co.uk

SOLENT SUBGROUP

Meetings are at 'Sarisbury Green Parish Rooms' see (http://sqpr.org.uk/?page_id=28) On the first Saturday each month from 1PM to 5PM. Contact Graham Evans 023 8040 3350 or send an email: graham@grayfire.f9.co.uk

NEMQLUG - NORTH EAST MANCHESTER QL USER GROUP

Meetings are held at 181, Urmston Lane, Stretford, Manchester. M32 9EH (Near Junction 7 of M60 Motorway, which was Junction 7 M63 Motorway) or occasionally at Alison Southern's home in Poynton (See inside front cover for full address details), by prior arrangement. Contact us beforehand for confirmation. Our informal meetings start at 7 pm. and finish at 11 pm. All welcome to our meetings which are held on the last Thursday of each month (except December). Contact John/Sarah Gilpin 0161 865 2872 for further details. or by email: thegilpins@btinternet.com

SCOTTISH QL USERS GROUP

SQLUG meets at George Gwilt's home every second Sunday in the month. Please contact George Gwilt before coming, to get the location by email: Gdgqler@gmail.com

SURREY QUANTA SUBGROUP (SQSG)

The group is currently trying other venues in the Leatherhead - Epsom area. If you plan to attend but do not get our emails, please phone or email Ken Bain for the latest location.

Meetings are 8.00 to 10.00 pm on a Wednesday, hopefully last of each month (none in December), but this can vary. Contact Ken Bain 01932 347432 (to midnight), alternative email: kenb@bcs.org.uk

SUSSEX QL USER GROUP

Currently without a meeting place, anyone interested should contact Roy Wood 01273 430501 or email: qbranch@qbranch.demon.co.uk or Keith Mitchell - 01903 742263.

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All Contributions are Welcome
Copy by Email to - editor@quanta.org.uk

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